

ON THE MOVE

Quarterly Newsletter

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Vision

Safer Communities
Through Successful
Youth

Mission Statement

ADJC enhances public protection by assisting in the changing of delinquent thinking and behaviors of juvenile offenders committed to the Department



Culture Change Ensures Safety for Staff and Youth

In January 2004, Governor Janet Napolitano appointed Michael Branham as director for ADJC. One of the many initiatives implemented by Director Branham was to infuse integrity, accountability, and a sense of ownership into the agency culture. This initiative would lead the agency to the necessary culture change that would ensure a safe environment for both staff and youths. A major first step was to reorganize the Internal Affairs Unit, which would later become the Inspections & Investigations (I&I) Division. The division's clear chain of command to the director was established to ensure timely notification of significant issues and events. A Zero Tolerance Project was also developed, along with a reporting mechanism that would allow anyone to report serious staff misconduct directly to the director. It was a declaration that all sexual, physical, and verbal abuse was deemed inappropriate and that all types of unacceptable behavior would not be tolerated.

Within the I&I Division, the Inspections Unit is charged with providing the director and the leadership team with a 'baseline' of data of where ADJC stood regarding daily operations and compliance with policies and procedures. The 'baseline' data was gathered through random audits, formal audits, leadership directed inspections, and safety inspections. The initial findings from the Inspections Unit revealed many deficiencies. A lack of consistency among all facilities was pervasive. As a result, a Policy and Procedure Unit was developed that worked with key staff to revamp the agencies policies on a regular basis. The Inspections Unit evolved from focusing on an auditing function to a unit that helps create an atmosphere of self-analysis and continuous improvement throughout all operations in the agency.

In order to attract experienced investigators to the Investigations Unit, pay was increased and training was enhanced. In addition, the Unit was divided into a Criminal Investigative Unit and Professional Standards Unit. The Criminal Investigative Unit is staffed with Arizona Certified Police Officers to investigate criminal allegations. ADJC improved the working relationship between local prosecutors by addressing the unique environment and victimology present in a juvenile correctional system. The Professional Standards Unit is staffed with experienced professional corrections officers, who are trained as investigators to examine alleged staff misconduct. Working relationships with the agency's legal staff improved; as a result, raising confidence that the investigation of youth grievances that involve alleged staff misconduct were transparent and thorough.

An automated case management system was developed and implemented that would electronically and immediately route all alleged criminal offenses and serious staff misconduct allegation to the Investigation Unit for review, assignment and investigation.

A 'narcotic detection only' Canine Unit was created to detect and prevent the introduction of drugs into ADJC facilities. The Unit consists of two youth correctional officers and their Labrador Retriever partners. The officers and their canines attended a rigorous nine-week certification process. Since the implementation of the Canine Unit, seizures of illegal drugs have dropped dramatically. A homeland security/intelligence officer was added and works in partnership with other agencies to promote agency

Profiles of Successful Youth

Zalina was committed to ADJC August 2006 for probation violations—she came with a history of defiance, absconding and substance abuse. In secure care, she worked on her substance abuse treatment utilizing the New Freedom program. Zalina did well in secure care and rose to the highest level in the behavior level system in two months. She was paroled back to Tucson in November 2006.

Zalina immediately enrolled in the ADJC Tucson Resource Center and shortly thereafter earned her GED. She currently maintains full-time employment.

Zalina had no negative contact with law enforcement and paid her court-ordered restitution. She consistently dropped clean UA's as evidenced by the TASC reports. She completed her counseling requirements as stipulated in her case plan.

Zalina's mother supported her absolute discharge from ADJC. She was compliant with all aspects of her parole plan conditions.

Zalina received an absolute discharge from ADJC in June 2007.

readiness to disaster response.

It takes a tremendous amount of effort and dedication for ADJC to complete its mission and properly serve the state, community, youths and their families. The Inspections and Investigations Division, and the initiatives created within, is only one part of a much larger structure designed to create and support a culture of safety, respect, responsibility and positive communication for all staff and youths.

What's New at ADJC

- ADJC employee Kathy Twitchell, Volunteer Coordinator for Black Canyon School (BCS), was recognized at the annual Soroptimist awards breakfast on April 10, 2007. Kathy was presented with the Kachina Award for her outstanding service and commitment to volunteer services at BCS. Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and young girls. The Department is thrilled to have someone of Ms. Twitchell's caliber on board.
- Seventy-one members of the Community Corrections staff met in April to receive training in Suicide Prevention, Professional Boundaries, and Data Security Awareness. This effort, on the part of ADJC's Staff Development and Training, provided instruction to staff in Community Corrections statewide.
- ADJC's Inspections and Investigation Division, MIS and Research and Development developed the new Crime/Incident Mapping program which plots the location and reports all incidents reported in the facilities. The maps will provide managers at the secure care facilities with information that will assist them in improving the safety and quality of life within secure care.

Director's Corner

Each year, The American Correctional Association designates the first full week of May as National Correctional Officers' Week. This is one of their many efforts to recognize Correctional Officers nationwide for their service and dedication.

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections honors our Youth Correctional Officers as they go about their daily routines, always accomplishing their duties at an exceptional level, consistently conducting their work with integrity and professionalism, and standing ready to respond as needed. Our Youth Correctional Officers are a vital link to our youth and are the front line resource to encourage them to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to ensure their successful reentry back into the community.

Governor Napolitano recognized the importance of our dedicated officers when she proclaimed May 6–12, 2007 as "Correctional Officers' Week", in concert with our fellow officers at the Arizona Department of Corrections. I, along with the ADJC administrative staff, extend a personal "thank you" to all of our Youth Correctional Officers.

I'm always glad to address any concerns. Please don't hesitate to contact me at my office, (602) 542-4302 or by email at mbranham@azdjc.gov.